EDU 221

Spring 2013

Curriculum Instruction Assessment (CIA)

FIAE Reflections – Chapter 6

In Chapter 6, of *Fair Isn’t Always Equal*, the author Rick Wormeli provides helpful suggestions on how to create test questions. The chapter outlines many of the common pitfalls in exam question design, and suggests ways in which to avoid them. In particular, Wormeli emphasizes the need for variety in test questions, and for the tests to demonstrate mastery, as opposed to memorization. The author also addresses the needs of the teachers. As with all tests, someone has to grade them. As such, the chapter provides useful ideas on how to manage grading in an efficient and effective way.

As a teacher in training, I often have grand ideas of the kinds of things I want to teach my students, as well as how I am going to assess the learning. This chapter helped me to think more practically about my role as “grader.” I think the idea of “double recording test responses” (Wormeli, p77) is great. One of the big ideas presented in this chapter was giving students prompt feedback, and the double record of test responses is a wonderful way to give students an idea of where they are at straight after a test. Another idea presented that I related to was the issue of timed tests. Speaking from experience, whenever I take a test and I feel like there is a time pressure, my anxiety levels rise and this can affect my ability focus, and it impedes my thought processing. Although timed tests have a place, I would definitely provide opportunities for students to take a test where they had more time, if the student expressed, or demonstrated a need.